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NOTES ON THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR AUGUST 30.

Surroundings and Critical Notes.

Golden Text: Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you.—Luke 6:27.

Intervening Events. — Parting from Jonathan, David became a fugitive. By deceit he obtained bread and a sword from the priests. He fled to the Philistines, was inhospitably received, and escaped by feigning insanity. Saul's wrath extended to David's relatives (1 Sam. 22:1, 3-4), to the priests who had unwittingly helped him (22:6-23), and to others, and many had to flee from their homes. David became the head of a band of outlaws, including his relatives, with priests and prophets and distinguished soldiers and citizens, and including also rough men who were fugitives of justice (22:1-5, 20; 2 Sam. 23:13 a; 1 Chron. 11:15 a). After Samuel's death (1 Sam. 25:1), David adopted rough methods, and became a polygamist (25:2-44). Saul meanwhile divided his energies between hunting for David and resisting the aggressions of the Philistines.

Time.—Conjecturally the second year before David became king (27:7). Say 1065 B. C., about 1014 B. C. by the current Assyrian computation.

Place.—Near Ziph, in the wilderness of Judah.

Parallel Passage.—A similar incident is narrated in chapter 24.

Verses 1-4.—The similarity in place and in ethical teaching between this chapter and chapter 24 is no reason for regarding one as a mere doublet of the other. For a time after the incident in chapter 24, Saul abstained from pursuing David. His renewal of the attempt seems to be one of the changes that followed after the death of Samuel (25:1 a).—Three thousand chosen men: This attempt seems to have been made with peculiar care.

Verse 5.—David inspects Saul's camp, that he may judge, what action to take.—Encamped: So in the American Revision twice in this verse; much better than "pitched" of the other versions.—The place of the wagons: The baggage of the camp was perhaps so disposed as to form a temporary fortification for the part where the king lay. Apparently this is the meaning of "trench" in the Old Version, and of "barricade" in the margin of the New.

Verses 6-7.—Ahimelech the Hittite: Mentioned only here. Evidently a man of distinction, as were many of David's fellow-outlaws.—Go down with me: Note the comradely feeling in the question.—David and Abishai came: No light-footed scouts were

ever more dexterous than they.—At his head: "At his bolster" (Old Version) may or may not be a correct interpretation.

Verses 8-9.—Abishai's proposal was in accord with ordinary worldly wisdom. He would rid the country of a tyrant by death, as the soldiers of Servia claim to have done last June. David's worldly wisdom is more far-seeing.—Jehovah's anointed: By this term David describes the office of king. As he aspires to that office, he will not now commit an act that will cheapen it, or render it less secure.

Verses 10-11 a.—A glimpse at the thing that David expects; namely, that Saul's throne will providentially become vacant, and that he himself will succeed. In the circumstances his sturdy refusal to do anything that will forestall providence is greatly to his credit.—Either his day shall come: This rendering of the margin of the Revised Versions probably gives the true sense.

Verses 11 b-12.—David will not harm Saul, but he will give proof that he had it in his power to harm him.—David took the spear and the cruse: Presumably took them by deputy, by the hand of Abishai.—A deep sleep from Jehovah: It was equally from Jehovah, whether it was providential or miraculous.

Verses 13-20.—David and Abishai get away to a safe distance, and then awake Saul and his men by shouting, and tell what they have done.

Verses 21 and 25.—I have sinned: Saul confesses that he has done wrong.—Return: He invites David to come back to him.—My son David: He is affectionate.—I will no more do thee harm: He is effusively contrite.—Blessed be thou my son, etc.: He is appreciative of David's greatness.

Verses 22-24.—At the moment Saul was, no doubt, sincere. If David had believed him, David would have been touched. But after the experiences he has had, we cannot blame him if his reply is unsympathetic, with an intimation that his confidence is in Jehovah rather than in Saul.

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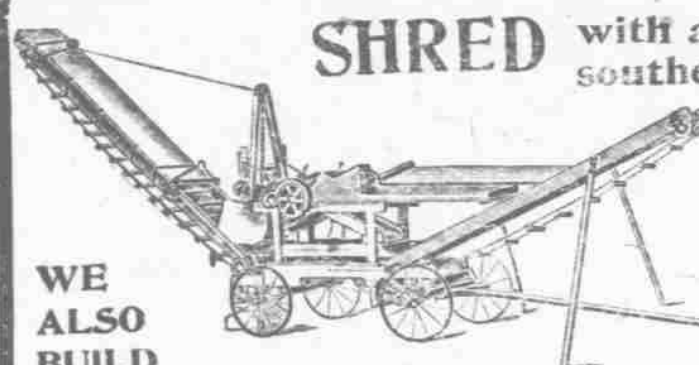
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